



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Great Government Through the General Management System – Quality, Timeliness, Value
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CLASS SPECIFICATION

CLASSIFIED

CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR

Class No. 005050

■ CLASSIFICATION PURPOSE

Under general supervision, to provide counseling services to inmates confined to the Sheriff's detention facilities; and to perform related work as required.

■ DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This is the journey level class in the Correctional Counselor series allocated only to the Sheriff's Department, Detention Services Bureau. A Correctional Counselor is responsible for providing counseling services for inmates confined to detention facilities. This class differs from the next higher level class, Supervising Correctional Counselor, in that the latter is a first line supervisor.

■ FUNCTIONS

The examples of functions listed in the class specification are representative but not necessarily exhaustive or descriptive of any one position in the class. Management is not precluded from assigning other related functions not listed herein if such duties are a logical assignment for the position.

Essential Functions:

1. Provides individual and group counseling to jail inmates who are experiencing emotional, social, legal, and financial problems.
2. Assists the Supervising Correctional Counselor in planning, coordinating, and implementing a wide range of correctional programs such as County Parole, Inmate Classification, Inmate Education, Law Library, Legal Services, and other educational, religious, or social programs.
3. Prepares evaluation reports on inmates for review and consideration by members of the courts and the County Parole Board.
4. Directs, assigns, reviews, and monitors the work of volunteers responsible for providing educational programs and services to inmates.
5. Acts as liaison between the Sheriff's Department and other County departments and agencies such as the Probation Department, County Parole Boards, State and Federal law enforcement or detention agencies, and outside community groups or agencies.
6. Provides information to inmates and representatives from outside agencies on jail programs, facilities, policies, and procedures.
7. May participate on the County Parole Board and implement orders provided by members of the County Parole Board, such as assisting inmates in transitioning from serving detention to performing mandated programs administered by community agencies.
8. Provides responsive, high quality service to inmates, County employees, representatives of outside agencies, and members of the public by providing accurate, complete and up-to-date information, in a courteous, efficient and timely manner.

■ KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

- Criminal justice system, especially law enforcement, judicial, and detention/correctional systems.
- California Penal Code, statutes, and case law pertaining to correctional services.
- Current trends and techniques in correctional services.
- Principles, methods, and techniques of counseling including cognitive behavioral techniques and crisis intervention when interacting with inmates suffering from dual diagnoses and other mental health afflictions.

- Human behavior theory as related to criminal behavior and institutional confinement.
- Local and regional community groups and referral agencies providing transitional assistance.
- Telephone, office, and online etiquette.
- County customer service objectives and strategies.

Skills and Abilities to:

- Design, coordinate, and implement a variety of correctional services, educational and social programs for inmates.
- Counsel incarcerated clients using crisis intervention and behavioral modification techniques.
- Understand the complexity of human situations that may arise during institutional confinement.
- Assist inmates with psychological, personal, and social issues and needs institutional confinement.
- Analyze information and use logical reasoning, judgment, objectivity, fairness, and consistency to make appropriate decisions and recommendations regarding inmates.
- Communicate effectively in writing and prepare clear and concise reports, memorandums, and correspondence for review by managers, representatives of the court of law and members of the Parole Board.
- Communicate effectively with a variety of individuals representing diverse cultures and backgrounds and function calmly in challenging situations, which require a high degree of sensitivity, tact and diplomacy.
- Establish and maintain rapport and effective counseling relations with clients of various socio-economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds.
- Establish effective working relationships with management, employees, employee representatives and the public representing diverse cultures and backgrounds.
- Treat County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information; analyze and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.

■ EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Education, training, and/or experience that demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed above. An example of qualifying education/experience is a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in counseling, psychology, sociology, criminal justice/administration, or related behavioral or social science field, AND three (3) years of experience performing professional counseling services for an agency or organization.

Desirable Qualification:

Experience in performing professional counseling to inmates or other residents of locked detention or correctional facilities.

■ ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The physical characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the classification. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable an individual with qualified disabilities to perform the essential functions of a job, on a case-by-case basis.

Continuous upward and downward flexion of the neck. Frequent: sitting, repetitive use of hands to operate computers, printers, copiers, and telephones. Occasional: walking, standing, bending and twisting of neck, bending and twisting of waist, squatting, using both hands to perform simple grasping and pushing and pulling; reaching above and below shoulder level, and lifting and carrying items weighing up to 10 pounds.

■ SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS

License

A valid California Class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, is required at time of appointment, or the ability to arrange necessary and timely transportation. Employees in this class may be required to use their own vehicle.

Registration/Certificates

None required.

Working Conditions

Work primarily takes place in locked County detention facilities with restricted access. Work involves frequent travel to locations within and outside of the county. Work involves frequent exposure to computer screens. Work involves constant contact with inmates who may be potentially upset, hostile, violent, and abusive. Work may involve exposure to inmates who have communicable or contagious diseases, in which case, the incumbent will be required to wear filters, respirators, or other protective equipment.

Background Investigation

Must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Felony convictions will be disqualifying. Misdemeanor convictions may be disqualifying depending on type, number, severity, and recency. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a thorough background investigation which may include a psychological, polygraph or other examination or test.

Probation Period

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in this class shall serve a probationary period of 12 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

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